

# Assessing the Effect of Exclusionary Discipline on Student Academic Outcomes

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# Agenda

1. Introduction and Motivation
2. Revisit time trends
3. Revisit disproportionalities
4. Ask new questions:
  - What is the impact of exclusionary discipline on student academic achievement?
  - Does exclusionary discipline affect academic achievement of certain subgroups differently?
5. Conclusion and Resources

# Introduction and Motivation

# Introduction to Arkansas Act 1329

- **OEP** has been presenting regularly in response to **Act 1329**:
  - Disproportionalities
    - There are disparities for **both subjective and objective** types of infractions
    - **Most but not all** of these disparities are driven by **between school differences rather than within school differences**
  - Differences across types of schools
    - Non-white students are more likely to attend “high-discipline” schools
  - Time trends

# Motivation for This Study

- **Exclusionary discipline (suspensions/expulsions) and zero tolerance associated with:**
  - **lower academic achievement** (Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Skiba & Rausch, 2004; Rausch & Skiba, 2005; Arcia, 2006; Beck & Muschkin, 2012; Cobb-Clark et al., 2015)
  - **school drop-out and grade retention** (Raffaele-Mendez, 2003; Fabelo et al., 2011; Balfanz et al., 2014; Marchbanks et al., 2014; Cobb-Clark et al., 2015)
  - **involvement in the juvenile justice system** (Balfanz et al., 2003; Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2009; Fabelo et al., 2011)
- **Disproportionate rates of exclusion for marginalized/disadvantaged students** (Skiba et al., 2002; Losen & Skiba, 2010; Skiba et al., 2011; Anyon et al., 2014; Skiba et al., 2014; Losen et al., 2015; Sartain et al., 2015; Anderson & Ritter, 2015; Anderson & Ritter, 2016)

# Moving Toward Causal Impacts

**Previous work is only correlational; great potential for reverse causality:**

- **We see suspensions precede low academic performance** (Rausch & Skiba, 2005; McIntosh et al., 2008; Balfanz et al., 2014; Cobb-Clark et al., 2015)
  - **Suspensions and loss of instructional time are associated with lower academic achievement** (Davis & Jordan, 1994; Scott & Barrett, 2004)
- **But low academic achievement is also predictive of a variety of undesirable behaviors in the future** (Miles & Stipek 2006; Arcia, 2006; Choi 2007; McIntosh et al., 2008)

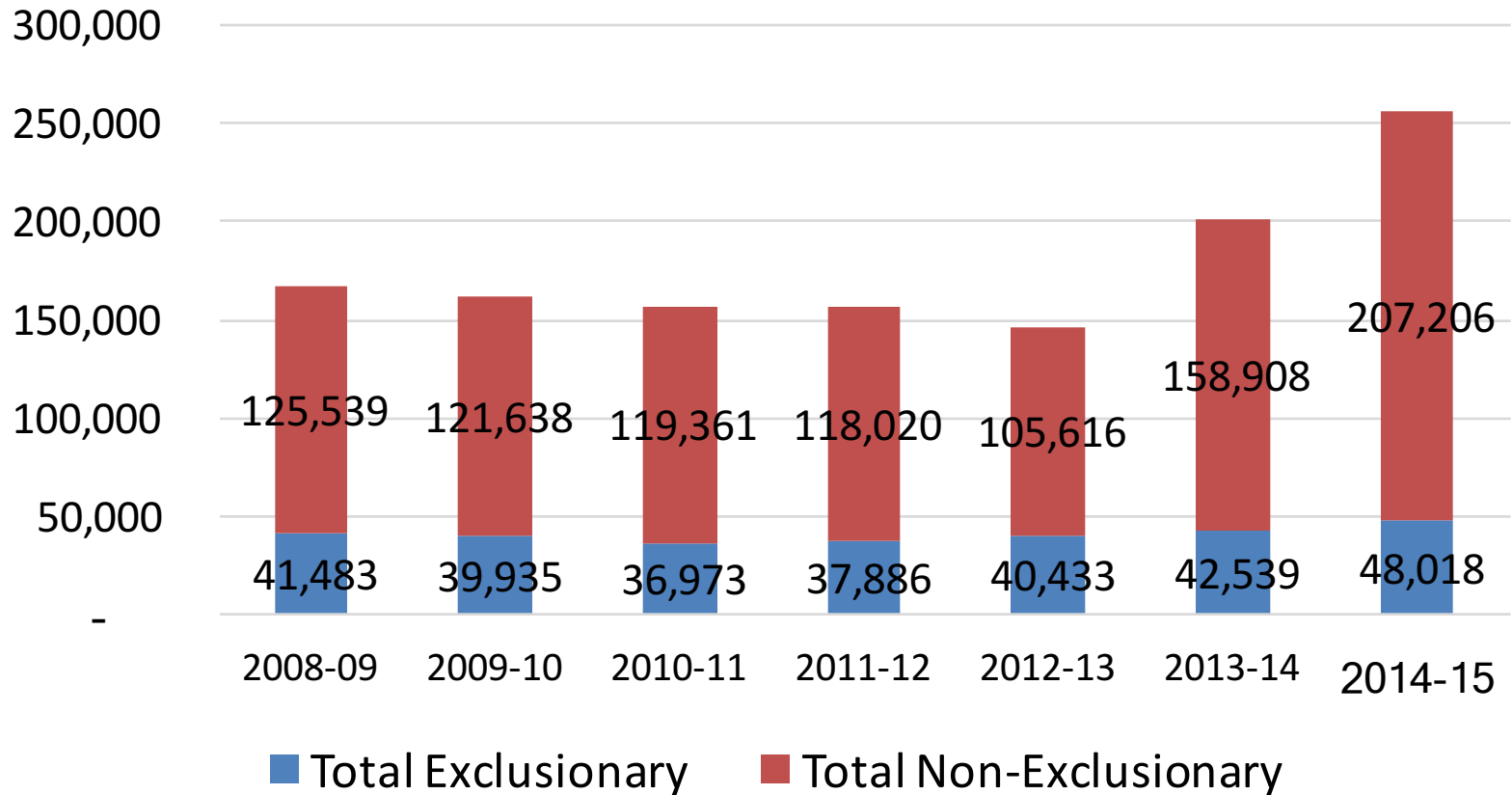
# Goals for Today

- I. Revisit time trends
- II. Revisit disproportionalities
- III. Ask new questions:
  - What is the *impact* of exclusionary discipline on student achievement, measured by student test scores?
  - Does exclusionary discipline affect academic achievement of certain subgroups differently?
    - Low- versus high-performing students
    - By grade level
    - Socioeconomic Status (FRL)
    - By race/ethnicity



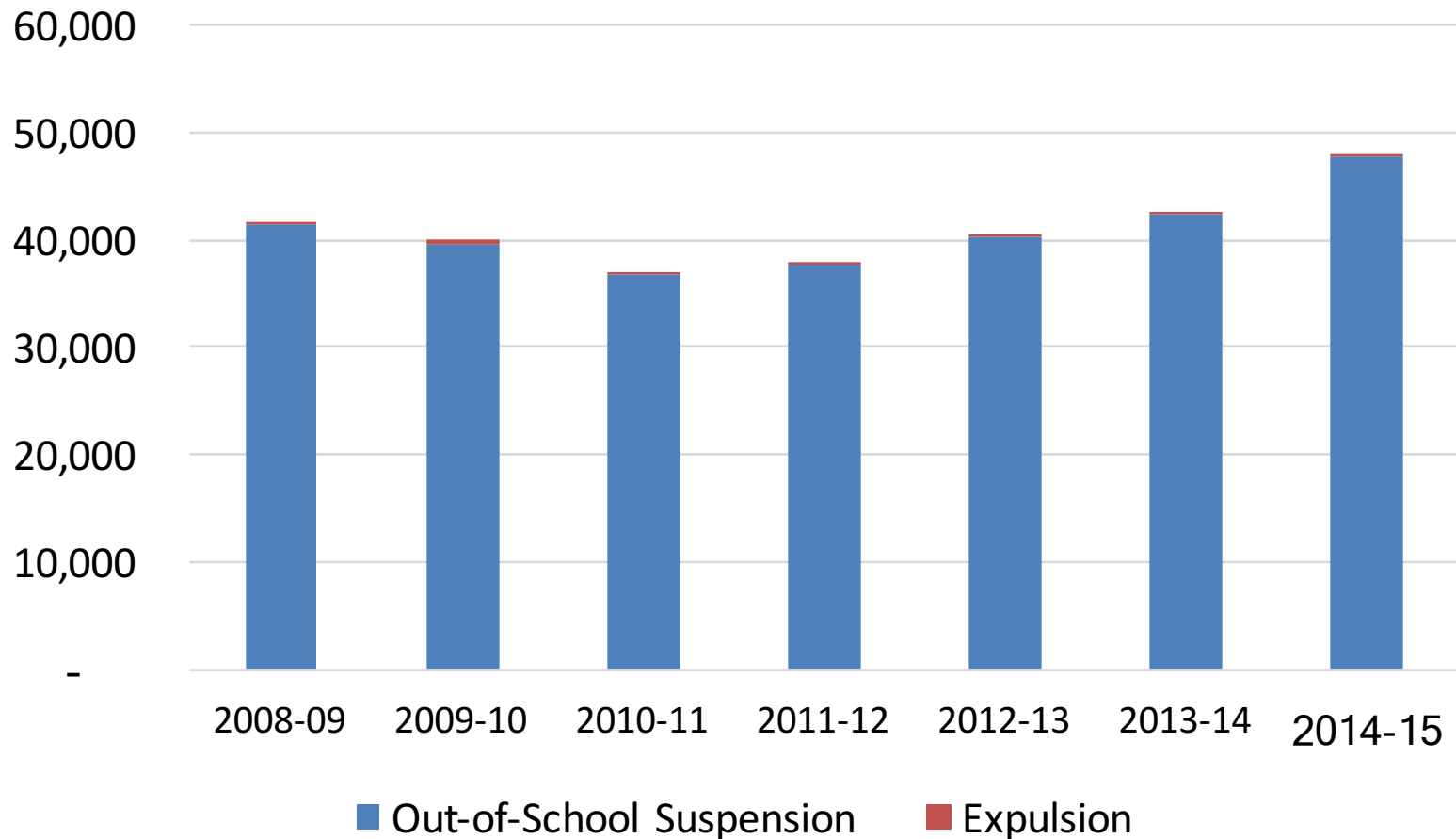
# Time Trends

# Reported Consequence Types Over Time

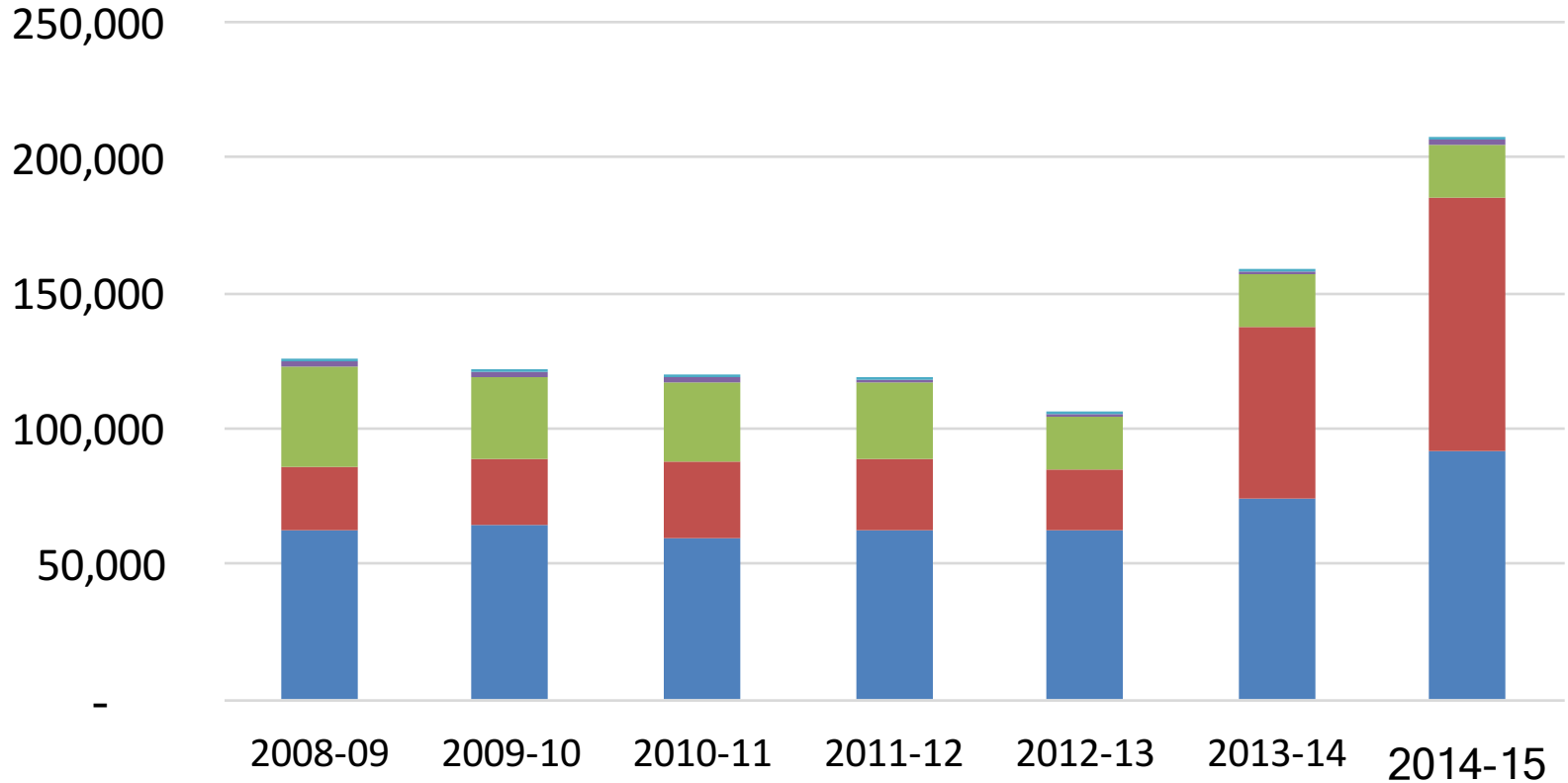


As a % of total, exclusionary discipline has decreased over past few years, but both buckets have increased (*perhaps improved reporting*).

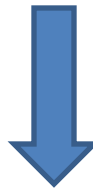
# Exclusionary Consequences Over Time



# Non-Exclusionary Discipline Over Time

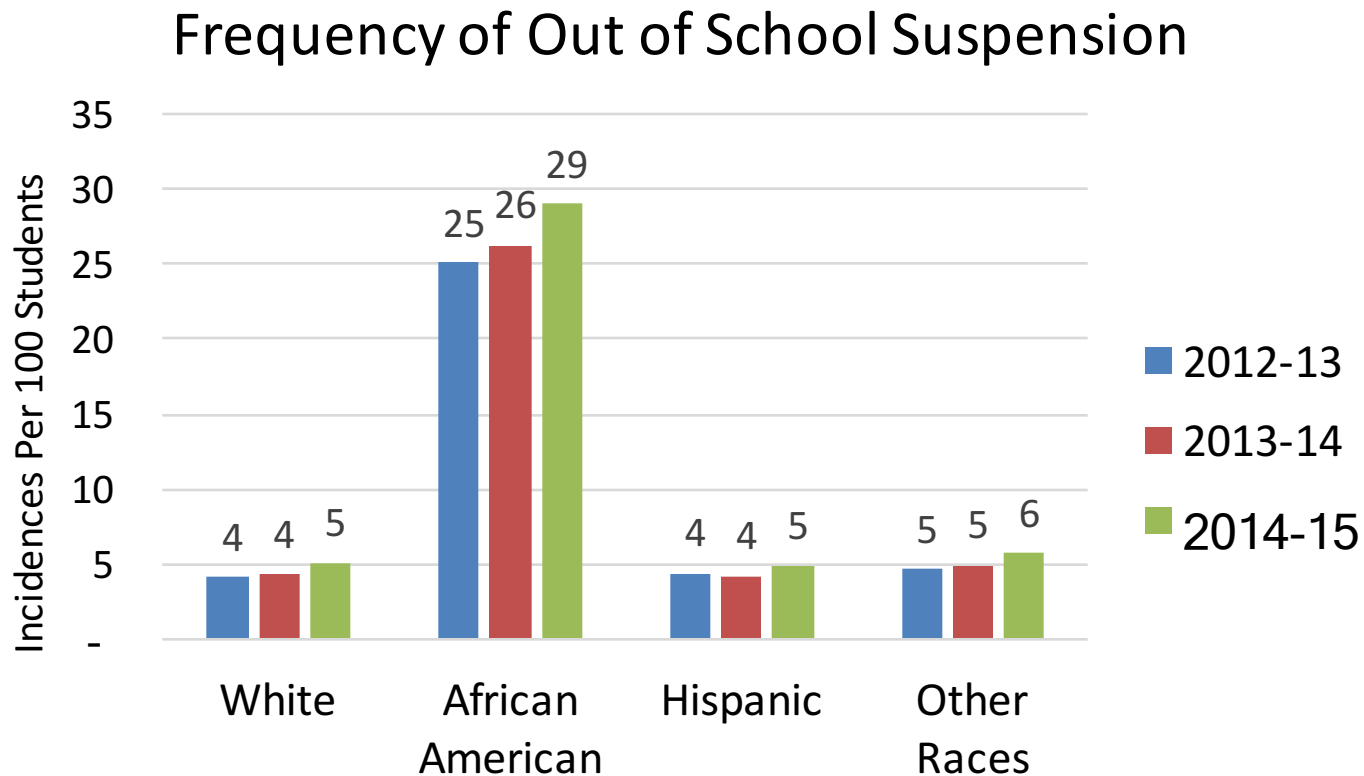


■ In-School Suspension ■ Other ■ Corporal Punishment ■ No Action ■ ALE



# Revisiting Disproportionalities

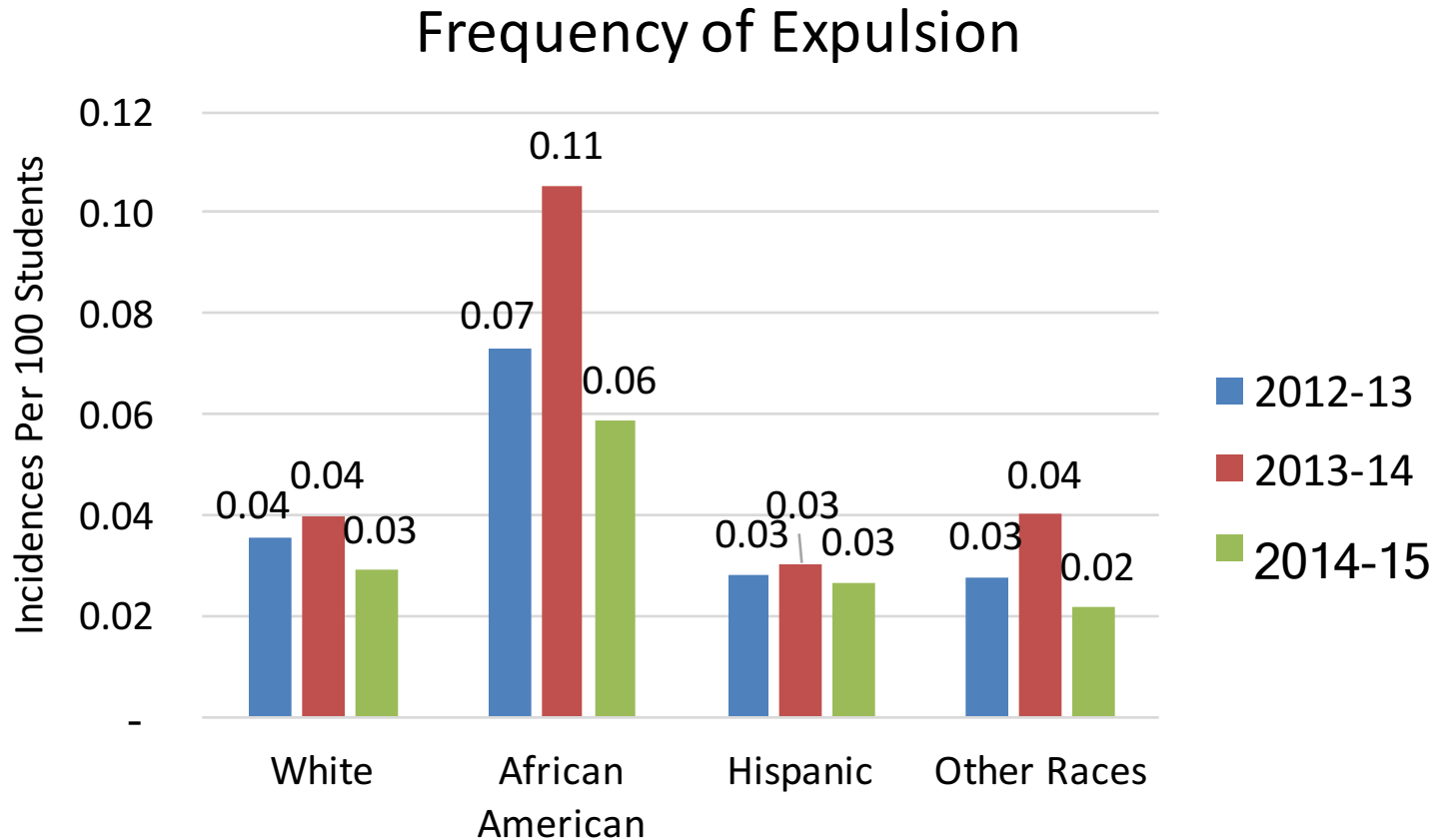
# What are the OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION rates for various subgroups of students?



## Key Takeaways:

1. African-American students are over-represented in OSS rates
2. Rates have increased over the past few years

# What are the EXPULSION rates for various subgroups of students?

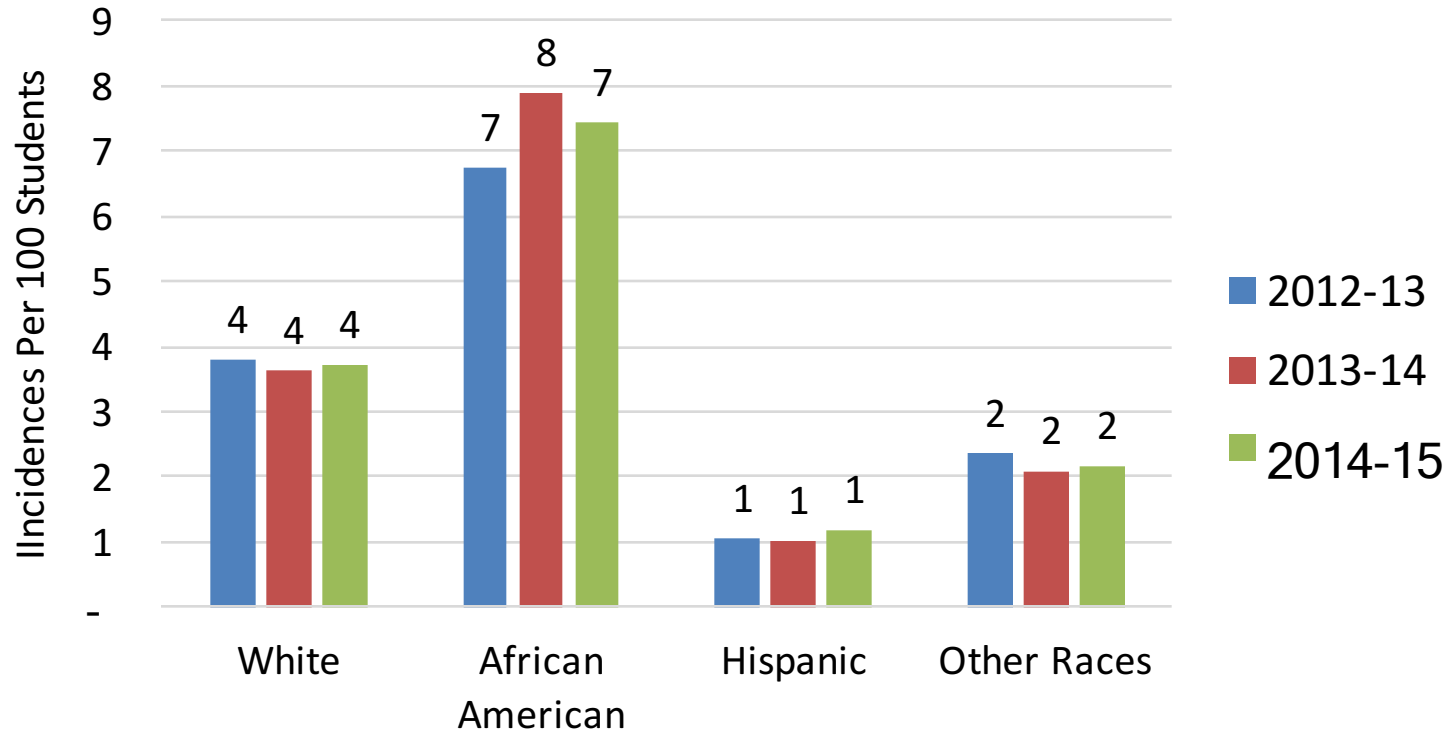


## Key Takeaways:

1. African-American students are over-represented in Expulsion rates
2. Yet these rates overall are quite low

# What are the CORPORAL PUNISHMENT rates for various subgroups of students?

Frequency of Corporal Punishment



## Key Takeaways:

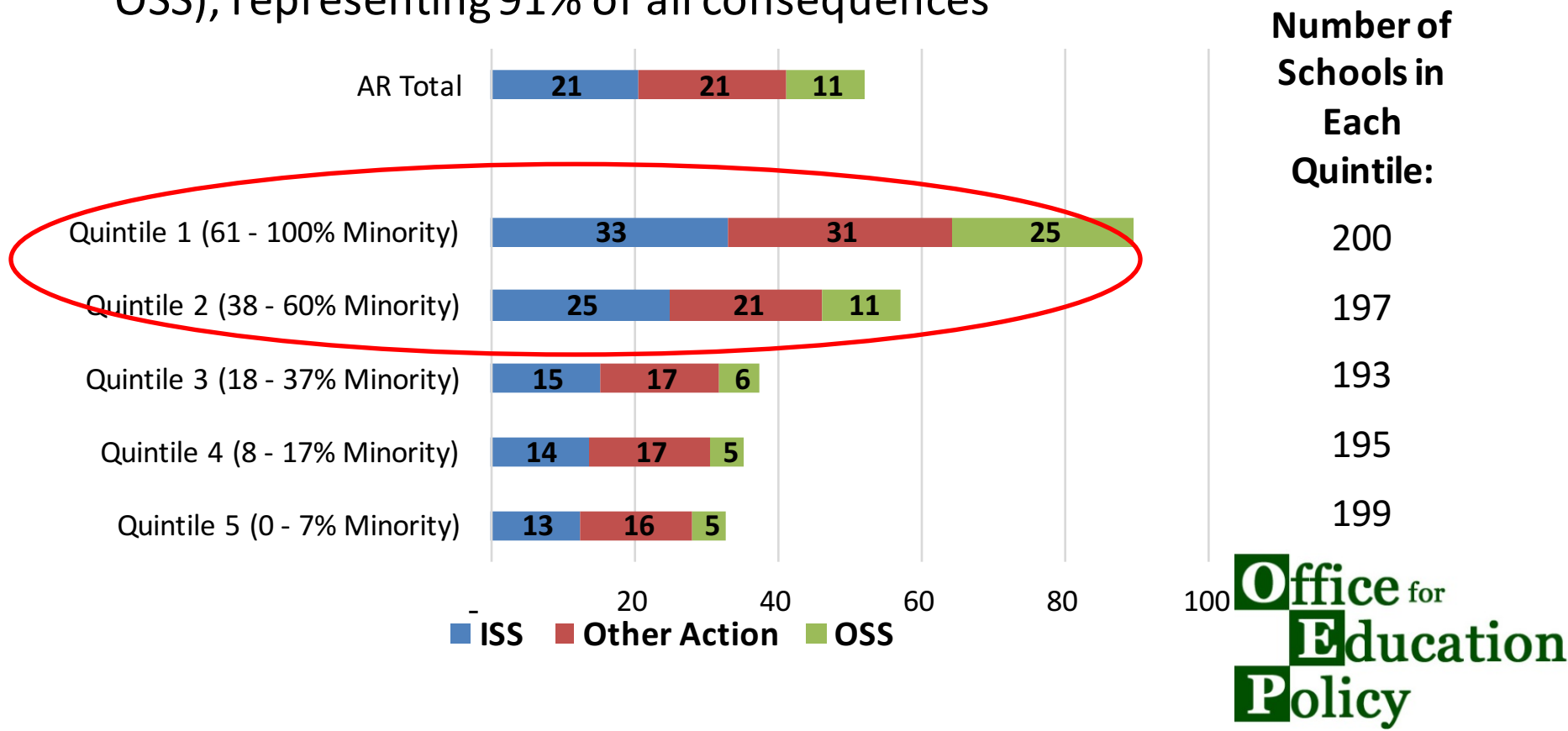
1. African-American students are over-represented in Corporal Punishment Rates
2. Overall rates relatively stable over past few years



# Differences Across School Types

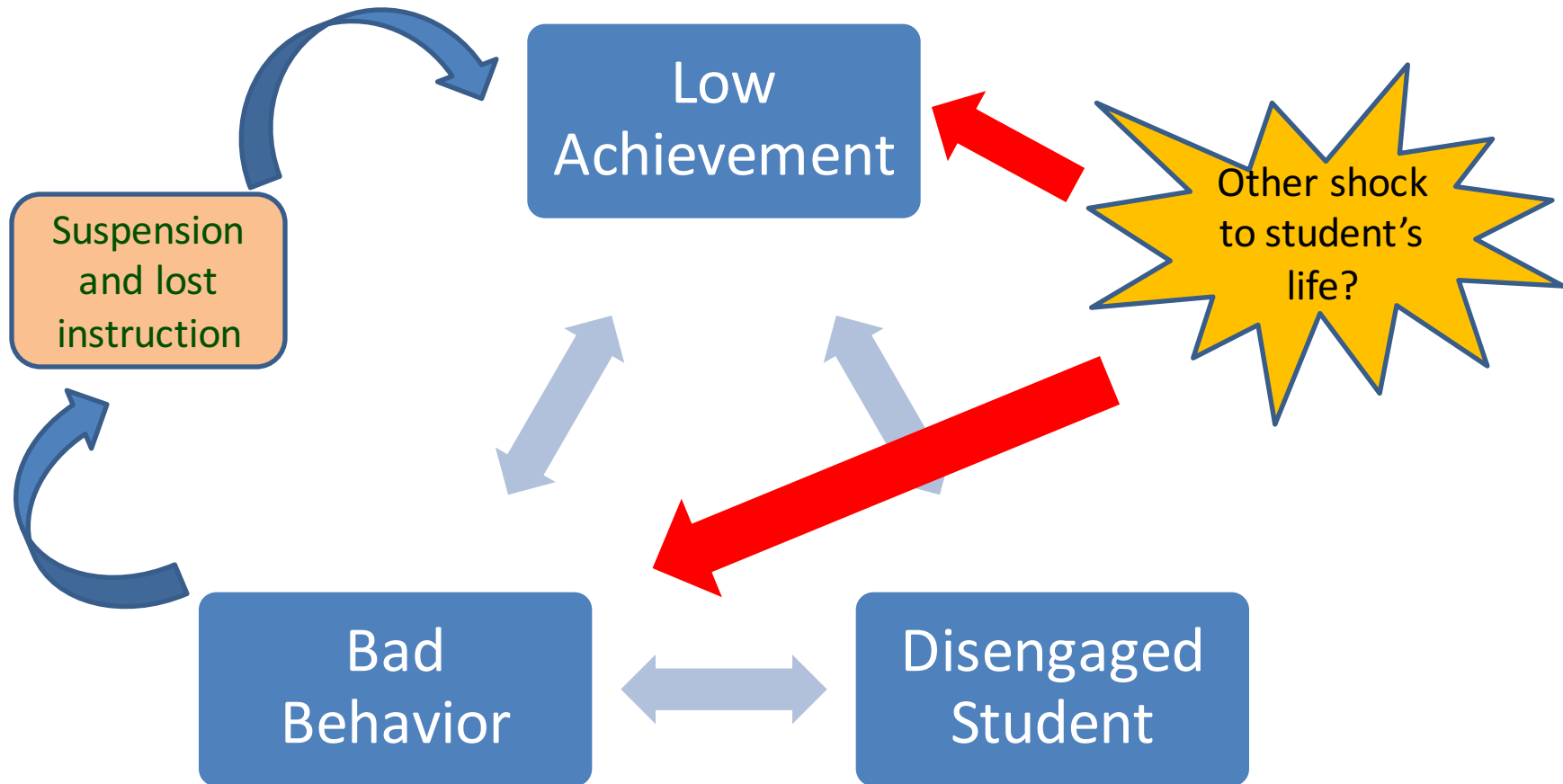
# High discipline schools tend to serve more non-white students.

- Compared 2014-15 discipline rates in schools with high and low non-white populations
- Focus on three most common consequences (ISS, Other Action, and OSS), representing 91% of all consequences



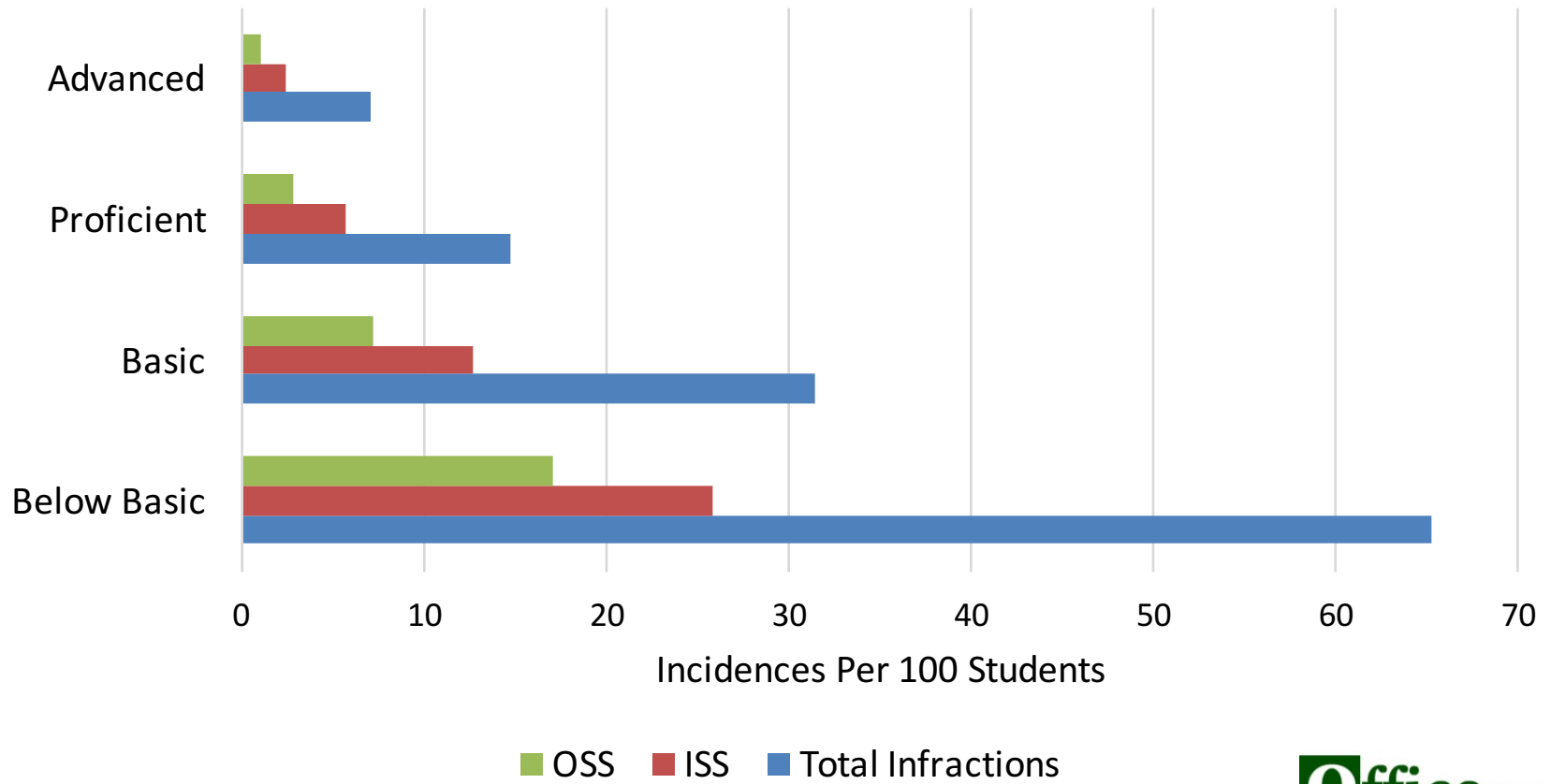
What is the *impact* of exclusionary discipline on student achievement, measured by student test scores?

# How does exclusionary discipline relate to student academic performance?



# How does exclusionary discipline relate to student academic performance? ONLY CORRELATIONAL

Disciplinary Rates by Math Proficiency Level

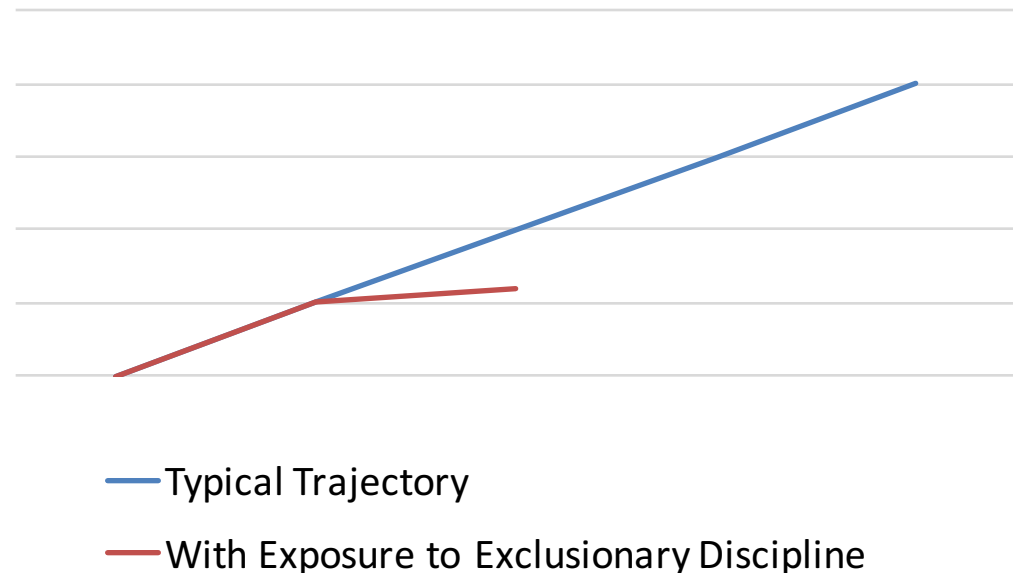


# How does exclusionary discipline relate to student academic performance? ASSESSING CAUSALITY

One rigorous method:

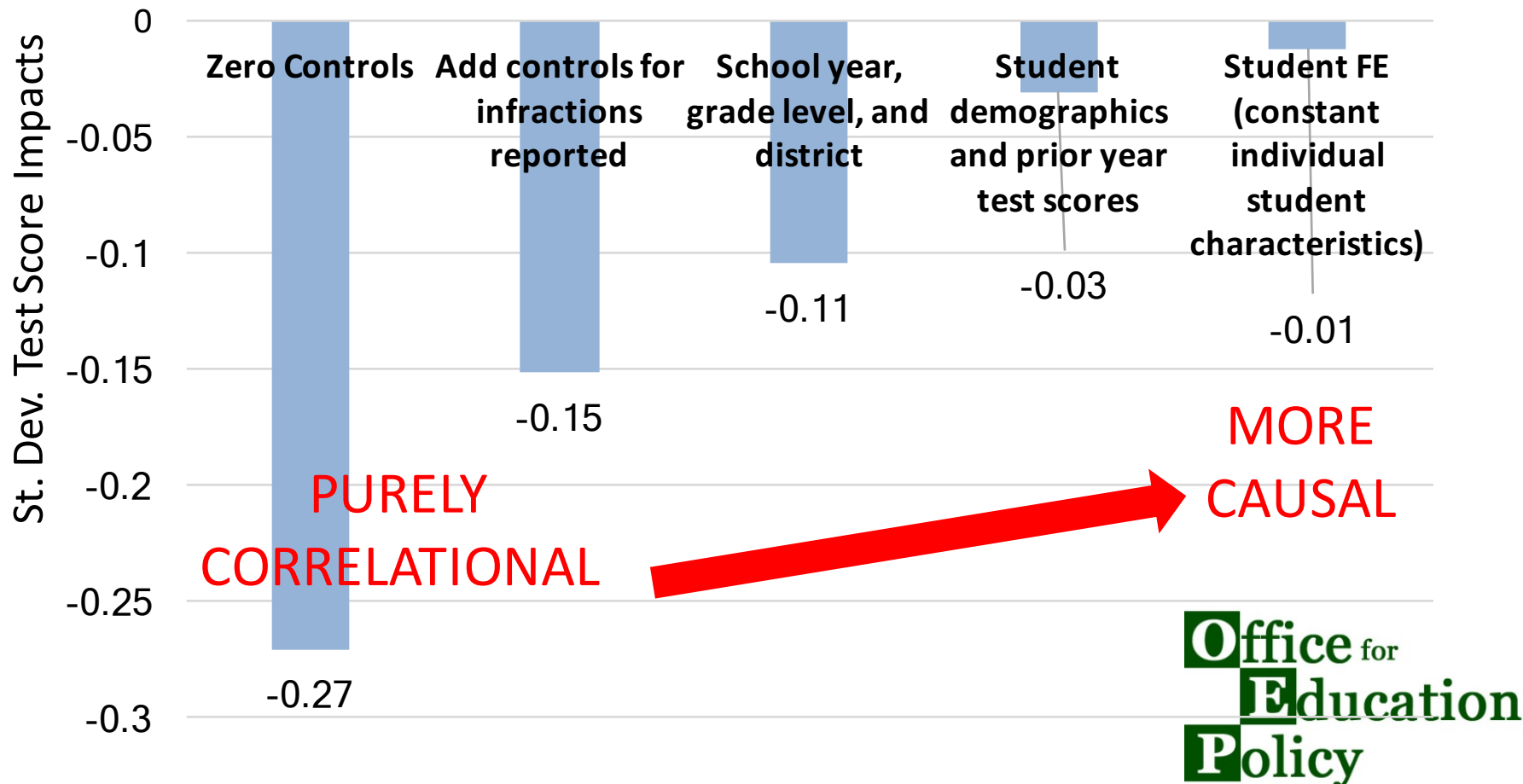
## Student Fixed Effects Method

Test how exclusionary discipline affects a student's test score trajectory ("student fixed effects")



# How is exclusionary discipline related to future math test scores?

Per-incident “effect” of exclusionary consequence on next year’s math test scores

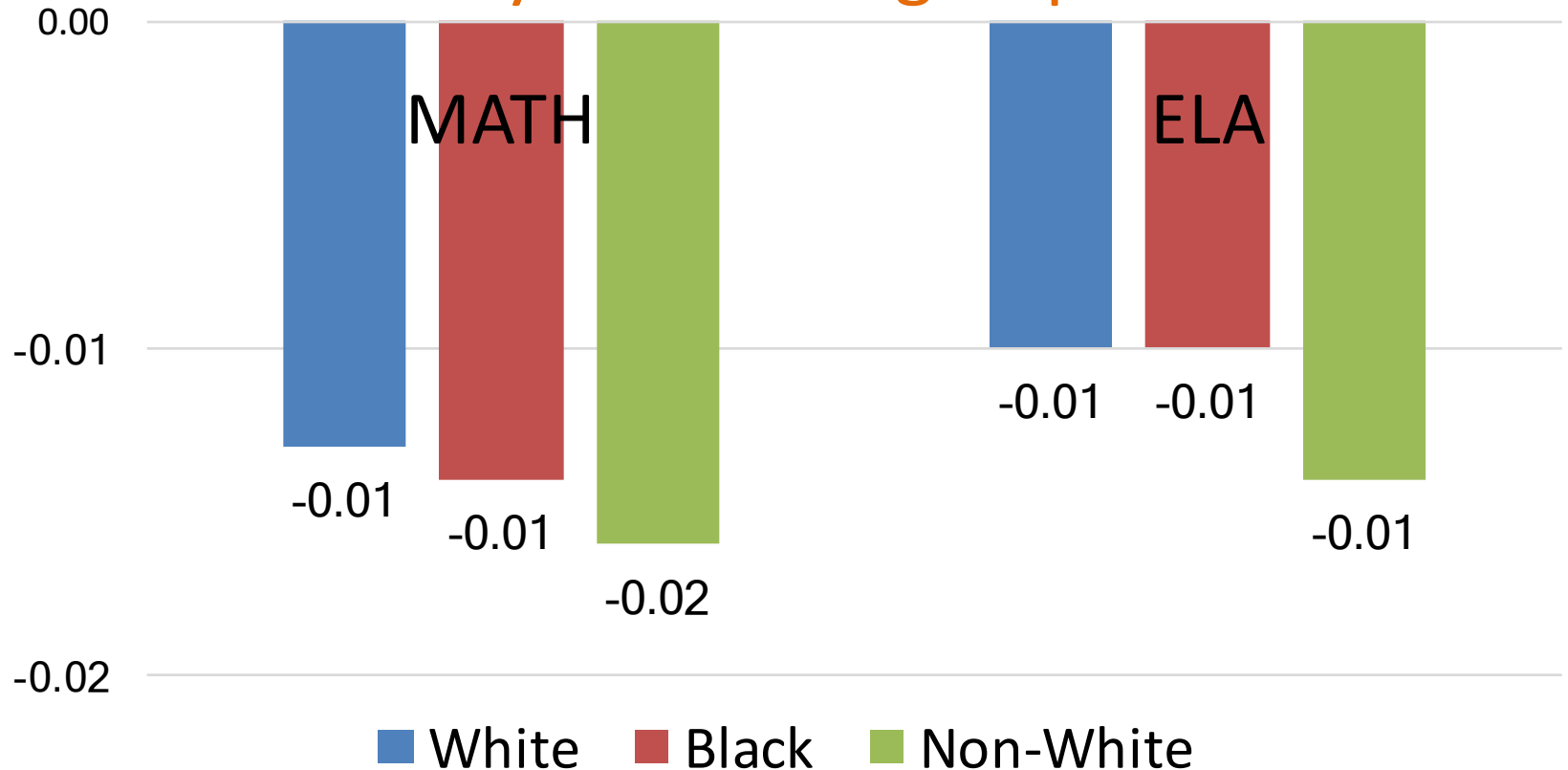


**We see a very similar story with  
ELA....**

**But are different types of students  
affected differently?**

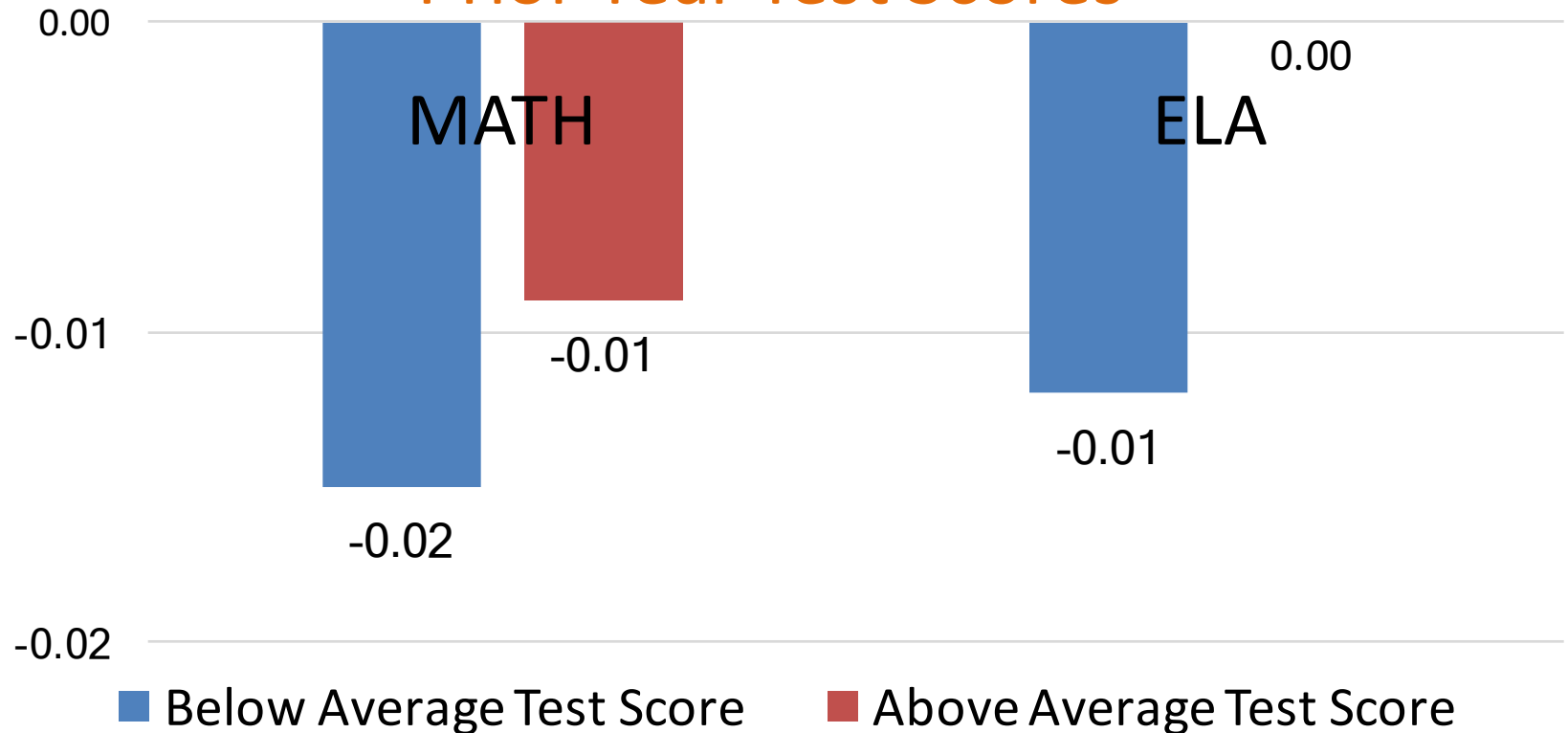


## Effect of Exclusionary Discipline by Racial Subgroup



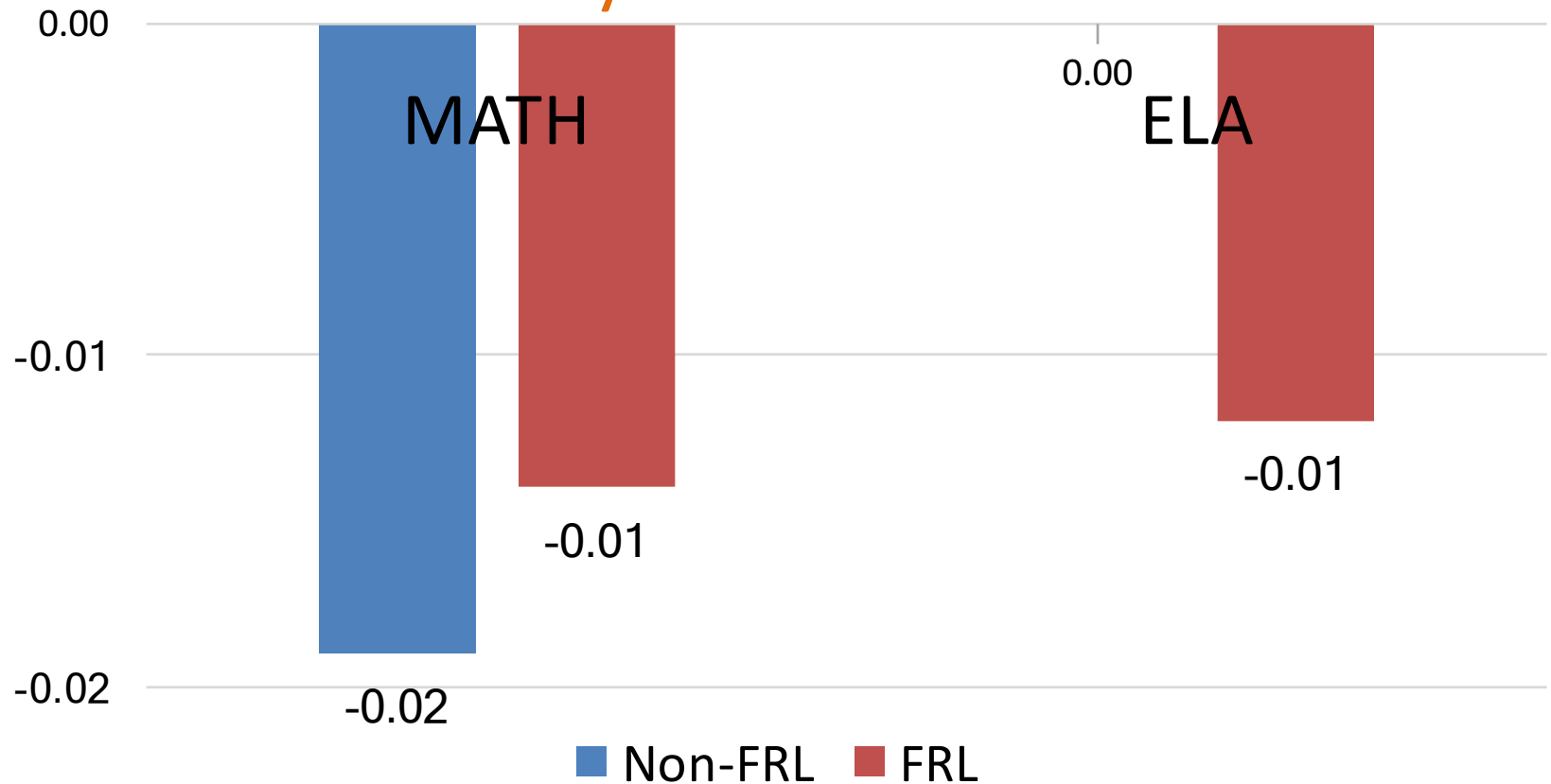
**Non-white students' test scores are harmed slightly more than white students' test scores.**

## Effect of Exclusionary Discipline by Prior Year Test Scores



**Lower performing students are harmed more by exclusionary discipline. Higher-performing ELA students unharmed in ELA.**

## Effect of Exclusionary Discipline by FRL Status



In math, non-FRL students may be harmed more,  
but in ELA, non-FRL students appear unharmed.

# Conclusion

- Need for rigorous methods to address reverse causality
- Slight negative impacts on academic outcomes for students who are excluded from the learning environment more often
- More harmful for students who are already lower performing and for minority students
- Given that there are disproportionalities in the administration of stricter punishments, particularly across schools, what resources are available?

# Resources

- As of May 2015, laws in 22 states and DC require or encourage limiting use of exclusionary discipline, implement more non-punitive strategies (Steinberg & Lacoë, 2016)
- Some evidence that changes to student codes of conduct can be effective (Lacoë & Steinberg, 2016; Mader et al., 2016)
- **Little rigorous evidence on alternative school-based strategies:**
  - Non-experimental evidence supports Response to Intervention (Fairbanks et al, 2007), restorative justice (Fronius et al, 2016) or some combination (Collins-Ricketts & Rambo, 2015)
  - Experimental studies find benefits of PBIS (Flannery et al., 2014; (Horner et al., 2009)

# Future Research

- **Alternative strategies/solutions**
  - **Qualitative research** to further understand school-level implementation of discipline policy (strengths, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities) and relationship to school climate and academic performance
  - **Rigorous assessment (random assignment) of PBIS, restorative justice, or other alternatives**
- **Another issue we don't cover in this study:**
  - School-wide/system-wide or peer effects
  - Impacts on the non-suspended students are hypothesized to either be positive (Burke & Herbert, 1996; Kinsler, 2013) or negative (Perry & Morris, 2014)

# Questions?

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